



# U. S. Environmental Protection Agency

## FACT SHEET

### Barite Hill/Nevada Goldfields

McCormick, SC

No. 1

April 2007

*This site information sheet summarizes the history of the site, activities presently underway at the Site, and future activities planned for the Site.*

If you have questions or comments about the Site, please contact us at the numbers listed below:

#### Contact Info:

U.S. EPA  
61 Forsyth St., SW  
Atlanta, GA 30303

**Leo Francendese**  
Federal On-Scene Coordinator  
(404) 562-8772  
(800) 564-7577  
[francendese.leo@epa.gov](mailto:francendese.leo@epa.gov)

**Sherryl Carbonaro**  
Community Involvement  
Coordinator  
(404) 562-8611  
(800) 564-7577  
[carbonaro.sherryl@epa.gov](mailto:carbonaro.sherryl@epa.gov)

South Carolina Department of  
Health and Environmental  
Control (DHEC)

**Craig Kennedy or Tim Kadar**  
(803) 896-4261

**DHEC Greenwood Office (local)**  
(864) 223-0333

#### Site History

The Barite Hill/Nevada Goldfields Site (the Site) is located approximately three miles south of McCormick, South Carolina between US 378 and US 221 in McCormick County, South Carolina. The Site actively mined gold from 1991 to 1995. From 1995 until Nevada Goldfields filed for chapter 7 Bankruptcy in 1999, the reclamation of the Site was being addressed by Nevada Goldfields. On July 7, 1999, Nevada Goldfields handed the facility's keys to DHEC and abandoned the Site. Bankruptcy trustees have been contacted and notified of EPA and DHEC actions and have agreed to sign an access agreement.

The permitted mine site totals 795.2 acres. Of this total, 659.7 acres are designated as buffer area, therefore, the area of concern is 135.5 acres.

The facility used a cyanide solution in a heap leach process to extract gold from ore. There are seven processing ponds containing an unknown amount of liquids. There are three large rock piles located on the site. Two of the piles were used to dispose of waste rock and overburden. Only one pile was used as a heap leach over which a sodium-cyanide solution was used. The heap leach in question is approximately 17 acres in size. The Main Pit (the Pit) from the mining operations remains. The Pit contains approximately 100 million gallons of acidic water with a high-dissolved metal content. Seeps from the Pit are being released to the northern unnamed tributaries of Hawes Creek which borders the Pit.

#### Current Activities

A walkthrough of the Site in January 2007 revealed the need for additional investigation. During the week of March 26, 2007, the U.S. EPA, SCDHEC, and the Bureau of Reclamation conducted an environmental assessment at the Site. During the assessment, incompatible chemicals were identified and neutralized on site. In addition, the venting system found in the furnace building was identified as a probable location of heavy metals that had the potential to exceed EPA's health based action levels. The building was demolished and disposed of on the Site. EPA and State representatives found evidence that trespassers have been on the Site. And finally, arrangements were made to post signage to notify of Site dangers and warn trespassers of those dangers. All actions have been coordinated with the State of South Carolina. The U.S. EPA assessment report is pending.

#### Upcoming Activities

DHEC is planning an availability session for early May 2007 to discuss activities at the Site. In continued coordination with the state, the U.S. EPA will provide assistance.